

THE CHAPBOOK

(A MONTHLY MISCELLANY)

No 24
June 1921



A LIST OF 101 COMMENDABLE PLAYS

ANCIENT & MODERN, COMPILED BY THE PLAYS &
PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE BRITISH DRAMA
LEAGUE FOR THE USE OF COMMUNITY THEATRES,
SCHOOLS & DRAMATIC GROUPS IN TOWN & COUNTRY

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE NET

THE CHAPBOOK (A Monthly Miscellany) first appeared in July, 1919, as a substitute for *Poetry and Drama* (A Quarterly Periodical). It is published about the middle of each month. The following is a list of the numbers that have already appeared :—

1919.

- (1) JULY.—*Twenty-three New Poems by Contemporary Poets.* 1s. net ; by post 1s. 2d. (Cover designs by C. Lovat Fraser.)
- (2) AUGUST.—*Decoration in the Theatre.* By Albert Rutherston. 1s. net ; by post 1s. 2d. (Cover and four plates by the author.)
- (3) SEPTEMBER.—*Poems Newly Decorated :* an Anthology of miscellaneous poems of the past, with drawings by artists of the present. 1s. net ; by post 1s. 2d.
- (4) OCTOBER.—*Some French Poets of To-Day.* A commentary with specimens, by F. S. Flint. 1s. 6d. net ; by post 1s. 8d. (Cover by Jean de Bosschère.)
- (5) NOVEMBER.—*Rhymes for Children,* with 70 appropriate woodcuts. 1s. 6d. net ; by post 1s. 8d.
- (6) DECEMBER.—*Four Songs : Nod.* Words by Walter de la Mare, Music by C. Armstrong Gibbs. *At the Turn of the Burn.* Words by George Townsend Warner, Music by Malcolm Davidson. *Melmillo.* Words by Walter de la Mare, Music by Clive Carey. *Arabia.* Words by Walter de la Mare, Music by W. Denis Browne. 1s. 6d. net ; by post 1s. 8d. (Cover by A. P. Allinson.)

1920.

- (7) JANUARY.—*A Collection of New Poems by Contemporary Poets.* 1s. 6d. net ; by post 1s. 8d. (Cover decorated by C. Lovat Fraser.)
- (8) FEBRUARY.—*Modern Prose Literature :* A Critical Survey. (Under the Editorship of Alec Waugh.) Contains Essays by Douglas Goldring, W. L. George, Alec Waugh, and Gerard Hopkins. 1s. 6d. net ; by post 1s. 8d. (Cover designs from an old book.)
- (9) MARCH.—*Three Critical Essays on Modern English Poetry.* By T. S. Eliot, Aldous Huxley and F. S. Flint. 1s. 6d. net ; by post 1s. 8d. (Cover decorated by Charles Winzer. Woodcut on back by Jan Poortenaar.)
- (10) APRIL.—*A Third Collection of New Poems by Contemporary Poets.* 1s. 6d. net ; by post 1s. 8d. (Cover decorated by C. Lovat Fraser.)
- (11) MAY.—*Some Contemporary American Poets.* By John Gould Fletcher. 1s. 6d. net ; by post 1s. 8d. (Cover designs by Charles Winzer.)

(Continued on p. 3 of Cover)

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(A Monthly Miscellany)

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London : The Poetry Bookshop, 35, Devonshire St., W.C.1

The members of the Plays and Publications Committee of the British
Drama League are :

BRIDGES ADAMS, CLIFFORD BAX, ASHLEY DUKES,
ROGER FRY, Sir ISRAEL GOLLANCZ, ST. JOHN
ERVINE, Miss GWEN JOHN, MICHAEL SADLEIR, F.
SLADEN SMITH, Mrs. GORDON-STABLES, FRANK
SWINNERTON, HERBERT TRENCH, W. J. TURNER,
ALLAN WADE, GEOFFREY WHITWORTH.

Foreword

THERE must be at least a dozen standards by reference to which a list of "Commendable Plays" could be drawn up, each open to its own objection. The present list makes no pretence to be an exception to that rule, but it is hoped that this modesty of intention will not lessen the utility of the list for the special purpose for which it is designed.

The British Drama League has, since its foundation, been continually assailed by the request or challenge to set down those published plays which could be best recommended for performance by Theatres or Dramatic Societies which cannot fairly be brought under the definition of the normal professional stage. It is clear that such a negative definition includes a very wide variety of theatrical effort, and this has been one of the prime difficulties with which the compilers have been faced, namely to make a selection which could be somehow applicable not only to an established Community Theatre but also to the smaller kind of Village or Urban Acting Society. To recommend a list of plays for a Village Group would have been a comparatively easy task, and it cannot be pretended that the compromise attempted is wholly satisfactory, still less logical. At the same time, although many plays have been admitted which may be beyond the capacity of the unambitious, we believe that there is here no play which could not rightly be tackled by any group of people who are brave enough to run the bracing risk of aiming higher than they can entirely achieve.

It will be already clear that the present is not in any sense a list of the "101 Best Plays." Of such impertinence the absence of Shakespeare's name from the dramatists included should be a sufficient refutation. Nor do we pretend that every play selected conforms to any definite standard of dramatic art. Our aim has rather been to offer a list which, representing many kinds of Drama, represents it also on many different levels of merit. We believe that in the last resort such a selection will be of greater practical value than one drawn up on academic principles of the best taste.

Neither should it be imagined that the plays appearing in the list have necessarily been chosen as the finest examples of their respective authors. In

our selection we have, on the whole, borne in mind the technical limitations of the Community Stage as the best practical condition of our choice. The plays, then, are to be regarded merely as characteristic examples—sign-posts to other works by the same dramatist, some of whose plays may be found of actually greater merit than those chosen as typical. This qualification applies with particular force to the selection made from the works of Ibsen, Yeats, Shaw, Lady Gregory, Barrie and Galsworthy.

The selection of plays for school production being governed by other than purely artistic considerations, the Committee realises that the choice must be at the discretion of the responsible teacher. But they believe that few plays have been included which either in theme or treatment are unfitted for school use. It is hoped later on to issue more specialised and detailed lists applicable to Schools and Village Acting Societies.

To facilitate easy reference, one-act plays are indicated throughout by an asterisk.

The thanks of the Committee are due to Mr. Harold Monro and to Mr. Harold Rubenstein for most valuable help given in the preparation of the List.

Modern Plays

ELIZABETH BAKER

(1) *CHAINS*

4 Acts. 7 m. 3 f. Sidgwick and Jackson. 2s. 6d.

A drab but convincing study of a city clerk's attempts to escape from his environment. He fails, but the play is not wholly gloomy. It contains many excellent acting parts.

MAURICE BARING

(2) *DIMINUTIVE DRAMAS*

Characters varying from 2 upwards.

22 one act plays. Martin Secker. 5s.

Conversational playlets of slight action, suitable for a tiny theatre. Some of them presuppose culture in the audience. "Katharine Parr" specially recommended for humour and popular appeal.

GRANVILLE BARKER

(3) *THE VOYSEY INHERITANCE*

5 Acts. 10 m. 8 f. Sidgwick and Jackson. 2s. 6d.

A witty and very dramatic story of a skeleton in a family cupboard. Attractive for its many delightful studies of the various members of the family.

GRANVILLE BARKER AND LAURENCE HOUSMAN

(4) *PRUNELLA*

3 Acts. 12 m. 10 f. Sidgwick and Jackson. 2s. 6d.

Pierrot and his followers are introduced into a prim Dutch garden to the discomfiture of two aunts and to the delight of a young girl. Fantasy pervades the play, and saves it from a tragic ending. Music (By Joseph Moorat) essential.

J. M. BARRIE

(5) *THE ADMIRABLE CRICHTON*

4 Acts. 10 m. 8 f. Hodder and Stoughton. 5s.

A fantasy on the theme of the survival of the fittest—in this case the butler to a noble family who in changed circumstances finds himself a leader of men. Adventurous, witty and charming play. Many good parts.

(6) *ALICE-SIT-BY-THE-FIRE*

3 Acts. 4 m. 5 f. Hodder and Stoughton. 5s.

Very typical of the domestic side of Barrie's genius, this play does not present the technical difficulties present in some of his more famous dramas.

CLIFFORD BAX

(7) **SQUARE PEGS*

2 girls. Henderson. 1s.

A rhymed burlesque on the hyper-romantic lover of the Renaissance and the inarticulate matter-of-fact lover of to-day. Simple set (garden).

ARNOLD BENNETT

(8) *THE GREAT ADVENTURE*

4 Acts. 15 m. 3 f. Methuen. 3s. 6d.

A witty dramatisation of the novel "Buried Alive." The eminent artist whose fame finds him out, and the comfortable middle-class body who mothers him while seeking obscurity, provide two excellent opportunities for character actors.

ARNOLD BENNETT AND EDWARD KNOBLAUCH

(9) *MILESTONES*

3 Acts. 9 m. 6 f. Methuen. 3s. 6d.

A study of the character and conditions of three successive generations, showing how the revolutionary of one epoch becomes the conservative

of the next, and how change is the one unchanging law of existence. A fine contrast to the "machine made" type of Drama, giving the audience to think while at the same time entertaining them with a keen observation of human nature.

RUDOLPH BESIER

(10) *DON*

3 Acts. 4 m. 5 f. Fisher Unwin. 2s. 6d.

A modern comedy, dealing with the adventures of an impecunious and idealistic young hero. Contains some excellent and not very difficult acting parts.

(11) *THE VIRGIN GODDESS*

1 Scene. 3 m. 3 f. Supers. J. M. Dent. 2s. 6d.

A poetical play of considerable beauty, suggested by, though not modelled upon, the Attic drama—to the acting of which it might well form an introduction.

BJORNSTJERNE BJORNSEN

(12) *BEYOND HUMAN MIGHT*

2 Acts. 10 m. 3 f. 2 children and supers. In Vol. II "Bjornsen's Plays." Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

Shows, in the person of a saintly pastor, how spiritual power can exercise an absolute dominion over the material world. Simple sets.

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

(13) **KING LEAR'S WIFE*

2 m. 7 f. In "King Lear's Wife and Other Plays." Constable. 15s. Also in "Georgian Poetry," Vol. II. 7s. 6d.

A powerful, grim, and at times sardonic tragedy of the death of a cast-off wife. Her daughter (Goneril) avenges her. Blank verse. The chief parts are two for women.

ROBERT BRIDGES

(14) *DEMETER*

3 Acts. 2 m. 4 f. Chorus. In "Poetical Works." Oxford University Press. 5s.

A Mask written for the ladies at Somerville College and acted by them at the inauguration of their new building in 1904. The action is supposed to take place "in the flowery valley below Enna." The play is short, and is admirably suitable for production in the open air, and for performance by the pupils of Girls' Schools.

HAROLD BRIGHOUSE

(15) **THE PRICE OF COAL*

1 m. 3 f. Gowans and Gray. 1s.

A simple little drama of the mental agony felt by a mother and her son's sweetheart while his death in a colliery accident is in doubt. Lanarkshire dialect. Scene, the living room of a collier's cottage.

GEORGE CALDERON

(16) *THE FOUNTAIN*

3 Acts. 10 m. 6 f. and supers. Gowans and Gray. 1s.

A satirical essay, in sufficiently dramatic form, on the essential uselessness of "good works." Several good cockney parts.

HADDON CHAMBERS

(17) *THE TYRANNY OF TEARS*

4 Acts. 4 m. 3 f. French. 2s.

Brilliant comedy of manners on conventional lines. "The Tyranny" is that of a wife over her husband. All the parts are good and "sympathetic."

HAROLD CHAPIN

(18) *THE NEW MORALITY*

3 Acts. 4 m. 3 f. In "Plays by Harold Chapin." Chatto and Windus. 12s. 6d.

A riverside comedy of much ado about nothing on the part of the inmates of two neighbouring houseboats. The situation is simple, but the wit with which it is exploited is more than usually subtle. Excellent acting parts.

G. K. CHESTERTON

(19) *MAGIC*

3 Acts. 6 m. 1 f. Martin Secker. 5s.

A fantastic modern comedy which so plays with the borderland between the seen and the unseen as to convince the most hardened materialist of the reality of the supernatural. Some "Maskelyne and Cooke" apparatus needed in the third act.

PAUL CLAUDEL

(20) *THE TIDINGS BROUGHT TO MARY*

4 Acts and Prologue. 3 m. 3 f. and supers with short speaking parts in one scene. Chatto and Windus. 6s.

A re-creation of the Age of Faith in free verse of the utmost beauty. This play is the most significant dramatic expression of the French Catholic revival.

HUBERT HENRY DAVIES

(21) *THE MOLLUSC*

3 Acts. 2 m. 2 f. Heinemann. 2s. 6d.

A comedy of "laziness," mental and moral. If the lazy heroine be well played, the result should be a brilliant and witty entertainment.

JOHN DRINKWATER

(22) *ABRAHAM LINCOLN*

6 Scenes. 36 m. 6 f. and 2 Chroniclers. Supers. Sidgwick and Jackson. 3s. 6d.

This episodic drama of Lincoln's career borrows part at least of its strength from its ethical commentary on recent history. Some parts can be doubled.

LORD DUNSANY

(23) *THE GODS OF THE MOUNTAIN*

3 (short) Acts. 14 m. Supers. In "Five Plays." Grant Richards. 5s.

Seven beggars pretend to be gods and impose on a city: the gods turn them to stone. Perhaps the author's most surprising and effective imaginative uprush. Some difficulties in presentation.

(24) **A NIGHT AT AN INN*

7 m. and an idol. In "Plays of Gods and Men." Fisher Unwin. 4s. 6d.

A fine specimen of the bizarre. Easy and effective. Chief parts a dilapidated gentleman and three rascally sailors. Simple set.

ST. JOHN ERVINE

(25) *JANE CLEGG*

3 Acts. 3 m. 2 f. 2 children. Sidgwick and Jackson. 2s. 6d.

A grey study of lower middle-class life, typical of the Manchester "Gaiety" School.

LOUIS ESSON

(26) **THE DROVERS*

7 m. In "Dead Timber and Other Plays." Henderson. 2s. 6d.

Just a story of the accidental shooting of "Briglow Bill," and how his good comrades were forced to leave him to die all alone in the Bush. Exterior scene.

MICHAEL FIELD

(27) *A MESSIAH*

3 short Acts. 16 m. 1 f. Supers. In "The Accuser," etc. Poetry Bookshop. 3s. 6d.

More adapted to stage production than most of Michael Field's other magnificent dramas. A young Turk is persuaded to believe himself a Messiah. He incurs the jealousy of the Sultan, who captures him, and, when put to the test, he fails utterly. The development of his character is of great psychological interest.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

(28) *THE SILVER BOX*

3 Acts. 11 m. 5 f. Duckworth. 2s. 6d.

Mr. Galsworthy's first play; a very incisive social comedy, showing the reactions of a conventional domestic family to a criminal episode.

(29) *STRIFE*

3 Acts. 22 m. 8 f. and crowd. Duckworth. 2s. 6d.

A strong play in which Capital and Labour each defends its position. The effect which strife between the two entails in the domestic life of the protagonists is skilfully worked out. Modern economic conditions are treated with great insight.

HALCOTT GLOVER

(30) *WAT TYLER*

3 Acts. Many characters. The Bloomsbury Press. 2s. 6d.

Chief persons : Wat Tyler the material democrat and John Ball the spiritual democrat. Represents the struggle of the toiler against the forces of oppression. Many of the parts could be doubled. Several scenes (not difficult).

N. V. GOGOL

(31) *THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL*

5 Acts. 19 m. 4 f. and supers. Walter Scott. 2s.

A classical and ingenious Russian farce, with satirical reflections upon varied types of character.

ERNEST GOODWIN

(32) **THE DEVIL AMONG THE SKINS*

3 m. 1 f. Published in "Voices," June, 1920. Chapman and Hall, Ltd. 2s.

A gay-minded monk seeking a rendezvous with a woodman's wife is surprised and hidden in a chest. Ultimately he escapes by a trick. A high-spirited farce, in the vein of Boccaccio but in an English setting. Period 1400. Interior scene.

LADY GREGORY

(33) **THE RISING OF THE MOON*

4 m. Putnams. 1s.

A light-handed study of the romance of outlawry. Scene : the side of a quay in a seaport town in Ireland.

(34) **THE GAOL GATE*

1 m. 2 f. Putnam's. 1s.

A mother enquires after her son at the prison door, and finds that he has been hanged a few hours previously. A moving little drama.

ST. JOHN HANKIN

(35) *THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL*

4 Acts. 7 m. 5 f. French. 2s.

A modern social comedy with witty dialogue and scope for observant acting. Ordinary drawing-room set.

THOMAS HARDY

(36) *THE DYNASTS*

Some hundreds of characters, m. and f. Macmillan. 8s. 6d.

An historical panorama of the Napoleonic Wars. Well-nigh impossible to perform as a whole ; but certain scenes are excellently adapted for isolated representation. Many of the parts can be doubled.

J. MACDONALD HASTINGS

(37) *THE NEW SIN*

3 Acts. 7 m. Sidgwick and Jackson. 2s. 6d.

A murder play, with an unconventional development which, with the right handling, should make for gaiety in the audience.

MAURICE HEWLETT

(38) *PAN AND THE YOUNG SHEPHERD*

3 Acts. 6 m. 9 f. Heinemann. 2s. 6d.

A Pastoral Play, mingling classical legend and Christian lore with a mediaeval disregard for chronology. Some fresh and beautiful situations. Needs good production and a sense of romantic rapture on the part of the principal actors.

STANLEY HOUGHTON

(39) *HINDLE WAKES*

3 Acts. 4 m. 5 f. Sidgwick and Jackson. 2s. 6d.

A strong play of Lancashire life. The refusal of the heroine to be made an "honest woman" at the expense of marrying a young man for whom she cherishes neither respect nor affection provides the central theme of this original and stimulating play.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN

(40) *BETHLEHEM*

2 Acts. 14 m. 2 f. Macmillan. 3s.

A very tender play on the Christmas story. So simple as to need the utmost conviction on the part of the actors, but, that granted, it will not fail in its effect. Music.

(41) *THE CHINESE LANTERN*

3 Acts. 3 m. 2 f. and supers. Sidgwick and Jackson. 3s. 6d.

Delicate exotic comedy. Gives scope to the imaginative producer.

HENRIK ISBEN

(42) *THE WILD DUCK*

5 Acts. 12 m. 3 f. Supers. In "The Works of Henrik Ibsen," Vol VIII. Heinemann. 5s.

A Tragedy of the "artistic temperament." Very typical of the Ibsen atmosphere, with a dramatic interest which almost plays itself.

W. W. JACOBS

(43) **THE MONKEY'S PAW*

4 m. 1 f. French. 1s.

A "Grand Guignol" thriller in which an atmosphere of the uncanny and horrific is skilfully worked up.

GERTRUDE JENNINGS

(44) **THE REST CURE*

1 m. 4 f. French. 1s.

An entertaining sketch of an invalid who enters a nursing home in order to undergo a rest cure, but who finds conditions generally more disturbing than soothing. Well observed, bright and eminently actable.

GWEN JOHN

(45) **EDGE O' DARK*

3 m. 1 f. and 1 boy. In "Plays by Gwen John." Duckworth. 7s.

A closely woven and powerful tragedy of collier life. Strong passions and characterisation. Scene: a cottage kitchen.

HENRY ARTHUR JONES

(46) *THE LIARS*

4 Acts. 10 m. 6 f. French. 2s.

A cleverly constructed comedy of manners, telling of a social complication and the endeavours of several agreeable but untruthful persons to escape from it. Demands polished acting, but this need not deter the amateur, as the plot is good enough and the characters real enough to render it entertaining under any circumstances.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

(47) *PELLEAS AND MELISANDE*

5 Acts. 6 m. 2 f. Supers. Walter Scott. 2s.

A drama of romantic love in a setting of mysterious beauty. Demands "temperament" in the principal actors, and a power to express the finer shades of young passion.

(48) **THE SIGHTLESS*

7 m. 6 f. Walter Scott. 2s.

A parable of unilluminated humanity. All the persons are blind. The play is involved in the author's characteristic atmosphere of mystery and terror at its most intense. Exterior scene.

MILES MALLESON

(49) *MICHAEL*

3 Scenes. 4 m. 3 f. 2 children. In "Young Heaven." George Allen and Unwin. 3s. 6d.

A simple story, with moral bias, of an angel being entertained unawares in the house of a peasant. Adapted from Tolstoy's story "What Men Live By." The same scene throughout.

JOHN MASEFIELD

(50) *NAN*

3 Acts. 8 m. 5 f. Grant Richards. 5s.

A powerful though painful study of the mental torture inflicted on a sensitive girl through the malice of unkind relatives and the cruelty of fate. The diction is fine; the aim of the author is to develop tragedy with the inevitability of the Greek Drama. Written in West Country dialect. Costumes of 1810.

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

(51) *SMITH*

4 Acts. 4 m. 4 f. French. 2s.

A story of a simple-hearted colonist who revisits his people in the old country in search for a wife and finds the parlourmaid the only suitable and attractive person.

A. A. MILNE

(52) *MR. PIM PASSES BY*

3 Acts. 3 m. 4 f. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

A psychological comedy of a readjustment between husband and wife following a revelation of the former's character brought about by a purely erroneous report in connection with the wife. An amusing play, in the best sense.

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON

(53) **IN A WORKHOUSE*

7 f. Women's Freedom League. 6d.

Shrewd and fresh and rather revolutionary observation of the inmates of a ward. Instructive for legislators.

HERMON OULD

(54) *BETWEEN SUNSET AND DAWN*

4 Scenes. 4 m. 5 f. Bloomsbury Press. 2s.

An episodic drama of disillusionment presented on impressionistic lines. Original and thoughtful. Dialect. All scenes interiors.

STEPHEN PHILLIPS

(55) *PAOLO AND FRANCESCA*

4 Acts. 20 m. 20 f. John Lane. 4s. 6d.

The famous legend treated in simple, sensuous, and dramatic blank verse. Affords excellent opportunities for romantic acting and décor.

A. W. PINERO

(56) *IRIS*

5 Acts. 7 m. 7 f. French. 2s.

A powerful and dramatic study of the deteriorating influence on a woman's character wrought by the love of luxury and ease. The characters are drawn as types rather than as psychological studies.

(57) *TRELAWNEY OF THE "WELLS"*

4 Acts. 10 m. 8 f. French. 2s.

A decorative comedy dealing with life and manners at the time when Sadler's Wells and Cremorne were rendezvous for Smart Society. A simple and unsophisticated plot is worked out in an effective setting of crinoline, Berlin woolwork and pegtop trousers.

MAGDALEN PONSONBY

(58) *IDLE WOMEN*

2 Scenes. 7 m. 7 f. and supers. Arthur L. Humphreys. 1s.

A light skit on the foibles of fashionable society and the craze for taking up with any new movement as a means of passing the time. One interior scene throughout.

GERTRUDE ROBINS

(59) **MAKESHIFTS*

2 m. 2 f. Joseph Williams. 1s. 6d.

A sympathetic little comedy of the humdrum lives of two young women workers who have to content themselves with the second best.

EDMOND ROSTAND

(60) *THE FANTASTICS*

3 Acts ; in rhyme. 5 m. 1 girl and supers. French. 2s.

A daintily tripping mockery of sentimental lovers to whose love their conniving fathers provide the necessary perils and romance. By reason of its expert stagecraft the piece almost plays itself.

ARTHUR SCHNITZLER

(61) **ANATOL*

2 or 3 characters each. Sidgwick and Jackson. 2s. 6d.

A brilliant cynical and artificial "cycle" of seven one-act plays, episodes in the life of youthful Vienna before the war.

BERNARD SHAW

(62) **THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS*

2 m. 2 f. Constable. 1s. 6d.

Will Shakespear seeking a clandestine meeting with his Dark Lady encounters Queen Elizabeth. They spar for a while, and Will makes the most of his opportunity to proffer a striking plea for a National Theatre. Shaw at his best.

(63) *MAJOR BARBARA*

3 Acts. 8 m. 7 f. Constable. 1s. 6d.

A comedy on armaments, slums, wealth, the Salvation Army, and almost every subject under the sun. Wonderfully alive and amusing, with very admirable character parts.

AUGUST STRINDBERG

(64) **THE STRONGER*

2 f. Henderson. 1s.

Tense situation between two women, one garrulous, the other (the Stronger) silent. The silent part is an acting opportunity.

ALFRED SUTRO

(65) **MOLLENTRAVE ON WOMEN*

3 Acts. 8 m. 4 f. French. 2s.

The comedy of a philosopher who has written a mighty work on the "sex" but who finds to his cost that practice is a different thing from theory. A delightful and very actable play.

J. M. SYNGE

(66) **RIDERS TO THE SEA*

1 m. 3 f. Elkin Mathews. (In one vol. with No. 67). 1s. 6d.

A tragedy, by the author of "The Playboy of the Western World," in poetic prose of great beauty; written in dialect, which is conveyed sufficiently, for practical purposes, in the cadence of the writing.

(67) **THE SHADOW OF THE GLEN*

3 m. 1 f. Elkin Mathews. (In one vol with No. 66). 1s. 6d.

A saturnine Irish peasant comedy of the way to get rid of a harsh wife. Grim characterisation, with more than a hint of the poetry of the open road.

ANTON TCHEHOV

(68) **THE BEAR*

2 m. 1 f. In "The Plays of Anton Tchegov," Vol. II. Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

An amusing farce of Russian courtship, treated in a broader and more conventional spirit of comedy than is usual in Tchegov.

(69) **THE SWAN SONG*

2 m. In "The Plays of Anton Tchegov," Vol. I. Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

An old actor wakes from a drunken sleep on the night of his "benefit performance," and deplores his past glory. Effective in proportion to the player's ability to realise and express the situation.

(70) *THE THREE SISTERS*

4 Acts. 9 m. 5 f. In "The Plays of Anton Tchekov," Vol II.
Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

Typical of this great dramatist's finest work, "The Three Sisters" portrays a Russian domestic interior with the strangest blend of humour, pathos and tragedy.

LEO TOLSTOY

(71) *THE POWER OF DARKNESS*

5 Acts. 13 m. 8 f. and supers. In "Plays by Leo Tolstoy."
Constable. 7s. 6d.

Powerful, terrible and great play of the life of the Russian peasant.

HERBERT TRENCH

(72) *NAPOLEON*

4 Acts. 22 m. 4 f. Oxford University Press. 2s.

Less an historical play than the symbolic treatment of the antagonism between good and evil in the reactions of two typical personalities. A drama of great nobility.

EMILE VERHAEREN

(73) *THE CLOISTER*

4 Acts. 7 m. and supers. Constable. 2s.

A powerful drama of monastic life. The play gives large scope for emotional acting, and presents with reverence and respect the Roman Catholic ideal of saintliness. At the same time the worldliness that sometimes underlies professional piety is shown actuating some of the monks to intrigue and jealousy.

GEOFFREY WHITWORTH

(74) **FATHER NOAH*

4 m. 1 little girl. Chatto and Windus. 2s. 6d.

A drama of Noah's temptation to sink the Ark and with it end the pain of the world once and for all.

OSCAR WILDE

(75) *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST*

3 Acts. 5 m. 4 f. Methuen. 2s.

A light society comedy in which characterisation is subordinate to witty epigram and sparkling paradox. Manner rather than technique is required in the actors.

W. B. YEATS

(76) **THE HOURGLASS*

4 m. 2 f. 2 children. In "Plays for an Irish Theatre." 8s. 6d.

A brief morality play written to assert the triumph of faith over scepticism. Simple cottage furniture and curtains are all the scenery required.



Ancient Plays

AESCHYLUS

(77) *AGAMEMNON*

4 m. 2 f. Male chorus. Dent (Everyman). 2s. 6d.

One of the best translations is that of Professor Blackie (see above). The chief parts are those of the queen and the chorus-leader. Greek tragedy at its most impressive.

ARISTOPHANES

(78) *THE BIRDS*

16 m. 1 f. Female chorus. Oxford University Press. 3s. 6d.

The play is of exceptional difficulty, but it is probably unsurpassed in its combination of humour and lyrical splendour. If Frere's version is used (see above), Swinburne's translation of the chorus might well be substituted. The men's parts can be doubled.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER

(79) *THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE*

5 Acts and Induction. 19 m. 4 f. and supers. Dent. 1s. 6d.

A play within a play. An Elizabethan burlesque of the romantic and heroic theatre of the day. Light comedy. Fresh and fairly easy to act.

(80) *PHILASTER*

5 Acts. 10 m. 4 f. and supers. In "Beaumont and Fletcher"
Vol. 1. Fisher Unwin (Mermaid Series). 3s. 6d.

A story of love and sacrifice with a happy ending, one of Beaumont and Fletcher's most famous plays; full of charming scenes in which the girl Bellario, disguised as a page to Philaster, is the principal figure. Has a number of good parts for men and women.

CALDERÓN DE LA BARCA

(81) *THE MAYOR OF ZALAMEA*

In "Plays by Calderon," translated by Edward Fitzgerald.
Chatto and Windus. 3s. 6d.

A great drama treating of the military power *versus* the civil, the latter personified by a blunt countryman in a Spanish village occupied by Philip's legionaries. He wins, and the play has, from its own heroic standpoint, a happy ending. Needs skilful production.

CONGREVE

(82) *THE WAY OF THE WORLD*

5 Acts, Prologue and Epilogue. 6 m. 8 f. Supers. Fisher Unwin (Mermaid Series). 3s. 6d.

A most brilliant comedy, full of pointed and witty dialogue, by the greatest stylist in English dramatic literature. It is also notable for the Meredithian figure of Mrs. Millamant, the finest heroine in all English comedy after Shakespeare.

DRYDEN

(83) *ALL FOR LOVE*

5 Acts, Prologue and Epilogue. Fisher Unwin (Mermaid Series). 3s. 6d.

This is a treatment by Dryden of the subject of Antony and Cleopatra. While it falls below Shakespeare's play as poetry and in imaginative power, it is done with wonderful virtuosity, and has been called "a triumph of transposition from a higher to a lower poetic key."

EURIPIDES

(84) *ALCESTIS*

6 m. 2 f. Chorus. George Allen and Unwin. 2s.

The story of a wife who dies in her husband's stead. This is the most domestic of all Greek plays; it is therefore the most likely to be popular. "Alcestis," like the other two plays of Euripides here mentioned, is translated into rhymed couplets by Gilbert Murray.

(85) *HIPPOLYTUS*

4 m. 4 f. Mixed chorus. George Allen and Unwin. 2s.

Aphrodite, angered by the scorn of Hippolytus, inflames his stepmother Phaedra, with a shameful love for him. The events following upon its disclosure lead to the death of Hippolytus.

(86) *MEDEA*

5 m. 2 f. Female chorus. George Allen and Unwin. 2s.

The choric proportion is fairly large, but this is an advantage in such a version as Professor Murray's. The effect of the play depends entirely upon the passionate and barbaric figure of Medea.

FLETCHER AND MASSINGER

(87) *THE SPANISH CURATE*

5 Acts. 13 m. 4 f. Supers. In "Beaumont and Fletcher"
Vol. II. Fisher Unwin (Mermaid Series). 3s. 6d.

A serio-comic play of Spanish life. Blank verse and prose. Somewhat difficult, but the plot is firmly contrived and the comedy remains fresh. Playable in a curtain set.

JOHN FORD

(88) *THE BROKEN HEART*

5 Acts. 13 m. 6 f. Supers. Fisher Unwin (Mermaid Series).
3s. 6d.

A tragedy, pathetic rather than terrible, written in blank verse of exceptional beauty. The chief part is a woman's. Not an easy play.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

(89) *SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER*

3 Acts and an Epilogue. 10 m. 4 f. Supers. French. 1s. 6d.

Less formal than Sheridan, Goldsmith presents a most good-humoured picture of eighteenth-century country life and courtship. Excellent scenes and acting opportunities.

THOMAS HEYWOOD

(90) *THE FAIR MAID OF THE WEST*

5 Acts. 19 m. 2 f. Supers. In "Heywood's Plays." Fisher Unwin (Mermaid Series). 3s. 6d.

A romantic melodrama of Elizabethan England, relating the adventures of a Devonshire Captain and his fair love Bess Bridget, Mistress of a Plymouth Inn. Full of life and vigour, with excellent comedy scenes.

BEN JONSON

(91) *THE ALCHEMIST*

5 Acts. 11 m. 1 f. Supers. In "Jonson's Plays." Dent (Everyman). 2s. 6d.

Dryden referred to this play as Jonson's masterpiece. It is a satire on the contemporary rage for dabbling in alchemy and the search for the philosopher's stone. To actors who can speak blank verse it offers great scope, for it abounds in passages of extraordinary eloquence and magnificence. Well played it makes a profound impression.

MARLOWE

(92) *DOCTOR FAUSTUS*

16 Scenes. 23 m. 1 f. Supers. In "Marlowe's Plays." Dent (Everyman). 2s. 6d.

This is the best dramatic form of the old Faustus legend. Contains some very fine scenes and is full of magnificent passages such as the famous address to Helen. There is no finer dramatic verse in the English language than in this play.

PHILIP MASSINGER

(93) *A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS*

5 Acts. 12 m. 5 f. Supers. In "Massinger's Plays," Vol. I. Fisher Unwin (Mermaid Series). 3s. 6d.

A bright and entertaining satirical comedy of Elizabethan London with a good plot, and notable for the admirably drawn character of the extortionate Sir Giles Overreach. Very modern in spirit.

GEORGE PEELE

(94) **THE OLD WIFE'S TALE*

13 m. 5 f. (3 either sex) and supers. Sidgwick and Jackson. 2s. 6d.

A play within a play. Light comedy and full of English folk-lore. Probably the earliest example of dramatic fairy tale. Easy to act but needs a resourceful producer.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

(95) *THE CRITIC*

3 Acts. 19 m. 8 f. and supers. Dent. 1s. 6d.

A light burlesque on the tragic drama of Sheridan's day and a satire on the critics and poetasters of the London theatrical world in the second half of the eighteenth century. Artificial characterisation and brilliant dialogue.

(96) *THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL*

5 Acts. 17 m. 5 f. French. 1s.

Brilliant comedy of manners. This supreme example of English eighteenth-century Drama is an excellent school for stage deportment. Demands technique and precision.

SOPHOCLES

(97) *ANTIGONE*

5 m. 3 f. Male chorus. Dent (Everyman). 2s. 6d.

Apart from the technical perfection, the pathos and the grandeur of "Antigone," it presents incidentally the love of man and woman in a more modern spirit than any other play of antiquity. Less difficult of performance than some Greek plays.

(98) *ELECTRA*

4 m. 3 f. Female chorus. Dent (Everyman). 2s. 6d.

Sir George Young's pellucid blank verse will be found easier to deliver with beauty than the rhymed couplets of Professor Murray. The choric proportion in this play is small. Comparatively easy of performance.

THEOCRITUS

(99) *THE FIFTEENTH IDYLL*

2 f. a singer, 3 other characters speak a couple of lines apiece.
In "The Idylls of Theocritus." Macmillan. 3s. 6d.

To Greek drama this is what a "Tanagra" is to Greek sculpture. It would play about 15 minutes. The clearest and most graceful picture of Greek daily life that we possess. The song would require special treatment.

WEBSTER

(100) *THE DUCHESS OF MALFI*

5 Acts. 12 m. 3 f. Supers and children. Dent. 1s. 6d.

A terrible and fantastic tragedy of Renaissance Italy in verse and prose. Requires no setting beyond a back cloth and curtains, but makes great demands on the actors in the principal parts.

MIRACLE PLAYS

(101) *THE CHESTER CYCLE*

In "Everyman with other Moralities." Dent (Everyman). 2s. 6d.

Roughly grouped under this title are a series of miracle plays on such subjects as Noah, the Sacrifice of Isaac, the Shepherds, etc. If acted with simplicity and directness, and at times with humour, they will not fail of their effect. "Everyman" itself is the finest extant example of the mediaeval morality play, describing in dramatic metaphor the soul's pilgrimage through the world.



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THE CHAPBOOK proposes, in the near future, to enlarge its scope, and at the same time, if possible, to diminish its price. With these objects in view it has decided to take a holiday of SIX MONTHS for reorganisation. It is hoped that the rates for material and production will, by the end of the year, have sufficiently decreased to allow publication at a lower price. Among periodicals THE CHAPBOOK is in the unusual position of being able temporarily to suspend publication without interfering with continuity. Accordingly the NEXT NUMBER WILL APPEAR IN JANUARY, 1922.

It will continue to be published by the POETRY BOOKSHOP, where all back issues can still be obtained.

It is hoped that present subscribers will leave the balance of their subscriptions in hand to be carried forward to 1922, but where a desire is expressed for the amount of any balance to be returned, it will at once be complied with. Meanwhile MSS. will receive the same careful consideration as usual, and any suggestions for the future will be welcomed: also further subscriptions to cover the year 1922.

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